

## Subdivision Survey of the North Spit, 1857

The first on-the-ground mapping of the North Spit occurred in October, 1857, in the contract work of cadastral surveyor Harvey Gordon. The rapid settlement of Coos Bay and the need to secure precise land descriptions for granting of patents on cash entries and Donation Land Claims compelled the General Land Office to hire Gordon to carry out this work. Gordon's field notes documented his labors on the North Spit in Township 25 South, Range 14 West, Willamette Meridian (Gordon 1857a). The notes provide information on the spit's condition. In 1857 it was a sandy, largely treeless, nearly level peninsula. Illegible words or figures are indicated by \_\_\_\_\_. The notes are transcribed with the line structure in Gordon's notebook.

### **West on a True line between Sec[tion]s 25 & 36**

1.06 Set meander post from which  
A Willow 4 in[ches] in dia[meter] bears S[outh] 62[°] E[ast] 67  
l[in]ks dist[ant]  
Do do do do N[orth] 31[°] E[ast], \_\_\_\_\_  
Land Sandy (Gordon 1857a:3)

### **North Between Sec[tion]s 23 & 24**

Beginning at meander post Between  
Sec[tion]s 13 & 24 On Pacific Ocean  
Thence  
West 1.19  
S[outh] 25[°] W[est] to Sec[tion] Cor[ner]  
South 5.68 to the place for  
the corner of Sec[tions] 23, 24,  
25 & 26 deposited 2 quarts of  
pebbles and set post  
8.00 To Beach of the Ocean Set  
meander post drove chained  
Stake omitting mound & \_\_\_\_\_  
Land Sandy soil 3d Rate (Gordon 1857a:4)

**West Between Sec[tion]s 23 & 26**

Var[iation] 19° 15' E[ast]

2.75 To the Sea Side, set meander  
post drove chained stake,  
mound and track omitted  
Land Third rate

**South Between Sec[tions] 25 & 26**

40.00 To q[uarte]r Sec[tion] corner  
Made witness corner N[orth] 88° W[est] 322 l[in]ks du-  
ly planting q[uarte]r sec[tion] post and chained  
Stake in a natural mound 12 f[ee]t high  
51.10 To shore of Coose Bay Set  
Meander post & drove chained stake  
No trees near  
Land Sandy 3d Rate (Gordon 1857a:5)

**East on True line between Sec[tion]s 24 & 25**

27.00 Enter Timber  
32.00 Top of bluff  
33.00 To shore of Coos Bay Set Meander  
post from which  
A Spruce 36" dia[meter] bears S[outh] 85[°] W[est] 188 l[in]ks  
dist[ant]  
Do do do do N[orth] 86[°] W[est] 90[°] do  
Bears N[orth] 89[°] 45[°] E[ast]  
Land Sandy Timber Spruce  
Soil 3d Rate

**West on True line Between Sec[tion]s 12 & 13**

11.00 Set Meander post on  
Shore of the Ocean drove chained  
Stake. Omitted mound & \_\_\_\_\_  
Land Sandy & 3d Rate (Gordon 1857a:6)

**[Meander Survey of North Spit]**

Beginning again in E[ast] Boundary  
at meander post then along  
N[orth]W[est] shore of Coos Bay

S[outh] 41 1/2[°] W[est] 5.70 in Sec[tion] 24  
 S[outh] 29[°] W[est] 30.50  
 S[outh] 36[°] W[est] 6.75  
 S[outh] 38 1/2[°] 28.70  
 S[outh] 44[°] W[est] 10.00 To meander post  
 S[outh] 38[°] W[est] 28.00 in Sec[tion] 25  
 S[outh] 29[°] W[est] 32.90 To meander post  
 S[outh] 22[°] W[est] 31.50 in Sec[tion] 26  
 W[est] 2.60  
 N[orth] 23[°] W[est] 4.30 To Pacific Ocean Rock in Entrance  
 N[orth] 10[°] W[est] 26.00 Bears S[outh] 42 1/2[°] W[est]  
 N[orth] 5[°] E[ast] 17.00  
 N[orth] 20[°] E[ast] 14.00  
 N[orth] 30[°] E[ast] 23.37 To meander post  
 N[orth] 19[°] E[ast] 8.47 in Sec[tion] 23 to meander post  
 N[orth] 24[°] E[ast] 79.00 in Sec[tion] 24 to meander post  
 (Gordon 1857a:8)

N[orth] 24[°] E[ast] 88.00 in Sec[tion] 23 to meander post  
 N[orth] 23[°] E[ast] 29.00 in Sec[tion] 12 to meander  
 post on E[ast] boundary (Gordon 1857a:9)

### **General Description**

This Township is W[est] of the Bay is poor and Sandy land.  
 There is some timber along Coos Bay and on some  
 of the Sand hills a meager crop of Grass.

South of the Bay the Fractional Section 36 is mostly 1st Rate  
 land Timber Spruce Fir and \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ Sallal &  
 Whorlteberry (Gordon 1857a:9).

The October, 1857, survey of Harvey Gordon to subdivide the North Spit in  
 Township 25 South, Range 14 West, Willamette Meridian, produced a description  
 of conditions and established the meanders of the southern tip of the spit (Figure  
 3). Gordon's notes confirmed:

- ▲ The spit was mostly treeless. In running the line south between  
 Sections 25 and 26, Gordon noted: "No trees near."
- ▲ The "General Description" stressed that the spit was a "poor and  
 Sandy land" with a "meager crop of Grass." Gordon noted that there was "some

timber along Coos Bay." The only conifers he noted were in running the line east between Sections 24 and 25.

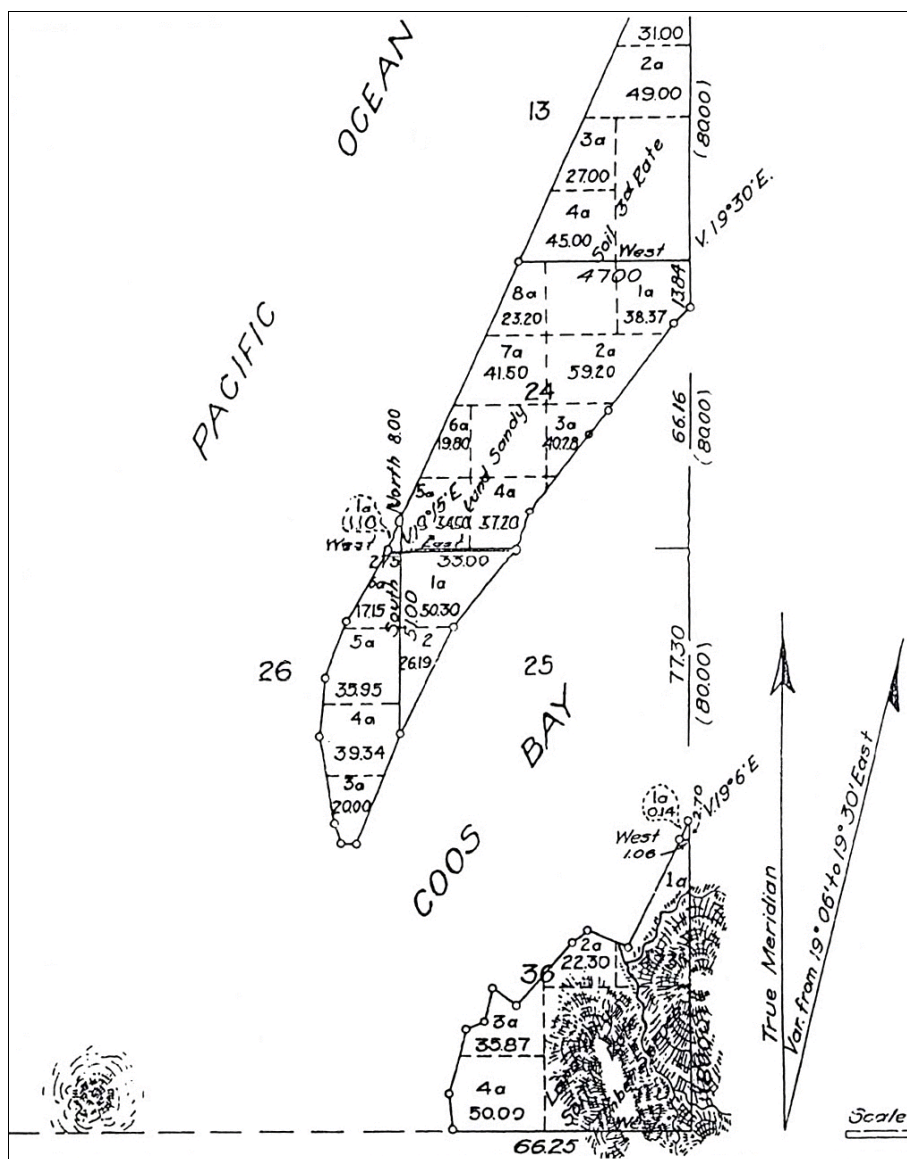


Fig. 3. Plat of North Spit, 1857, showing Guano Rock to southwest, fractional portion of Section 36 to southeast, lots 1a and 2 in Section 25 and lots 3a, 4a, 5a, and 6a in Section 26 (Gordon 1857b). Lot 3a, the tip of the spit, lay due west of the northern boundary of Section 36, or north of Pigeon Point on the east side of the estuary.